1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

In its physical aspect as a complex of flocks, grazing lands, huts, and sheep-folds it was referred to as a stani (στάνη), or when the speaker was more concerned with the relations of dependence and co-operation between the tselingas and his followers, as the 'tselingato' (τὸ τσελιγκᾶτο); 50–150 men, women and children were the approximate human limits of the traditional stani. Although the co-operating families paid at the end of each period of six months for a share of the grazing land in proportion to the size of their flocks, the power of the tselingas was great. Since the lease was his own, a family unwilling to accept his authority could be expelled. The sale of milk, meat, and wool, the purchase of flour, salt, and other essential needs of the stani, were entirely in his hands. Through the six-month period the other families lived on his credit, and at its close his detailed calculations of profit and debt were necessarily taken on trust since he was often the only literate man in the group.

The measures of 1930 concerning protected leases had already modified the power of the tselingas since not only he but all his associated shepherds were individually protected under the law. But the regulations of Metaxas radically reinforced this trend since now each shepherd citizen was firmly entitled to graze his sheep for six months on the communal grassland of his own village. Thus in the summer pastures of the Zagori villages where a majority of the community had claimed their rights of citizenship, the size of the stani became more narrowly related to the simple needs of sheep management. In general, it became smaller in numbers, seldom exceeding 30 men, women, and children, but sometimes including only the members of a single family; its members were now almost exclusively kinsmen and affinal relations; its structure was looser and more egalitarian. There were parallel changes in the size and form of the winter stani. The winter groups, however, remained somewhat larger (up to 50 persons of all ages and sometimes more), since with lambing and milking more hands are needed in winter than summer. Moreover, with the shortage of winter grazing any man with land at his disposal, which for one reason or another was not subject to a protected lease, was still able to hold in a position of dependence as many sheep and men as his land would carry.

A further consequence was that the poorer shepherds.

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for these arrangements[1] is public opinion. The sanction However reluctant a man may be to hand over the reins to his son, he knows that he will lose less personal prestige by moving into retirement than by attempting to hold power against the conventions of customary usage. He is also aware that any temporizing over this problem will lead to the kind of friction with his son that is unlikely to remain private and may result in a further loss of prestige for the whole family.

There are two other circumstances which may help to persuade a father to cede his position at the customary time. Grazing land in summer for a herd of three hundred sheep and goats represents a considerable area of mountainous country. The journey from the huts of the family near the village to the farthest limits of the summer grazing is very often a walk of two or three hours, climbing steeply the whole way along difficult rock-strewn paths generally no wider than a rabbit's track. Such a journey two or three times a week for a man in his early sixties, which is the age a father is likely to have reached when his own son approaches the age of marriage, is a severe physical strain. But if the family head is not physically able to see for himself the condition of the grass and the state of his animals, his shepherd sons cease to treat his instructions or criticisms with any seriousness, and in respect to animal management virtually arrange matters for themselves. From this point it is a short step to question the father's authority in other matters. Physical or mental feebleness of the father is invariably the explanation of a son assuming control of family affairs at an early age.

The second circumstance has to do with the relation of the family to the outside world. With few exceptions the shepherds who are today over sixty years of age are illiterate. Under modern conditions these men are at an obvious disadvantage in understanding the content of government agricultural regulations and in filling up the increasing number of printed forms. Unlike their more sophisticated and literate sons, men of this age group do not understand the ways of minor officials. 'They don't know how to go about things in the offices' (δὲν ξέρουν τὰ γραφεῖα), their sons explain. In part, the prestige of letters is attributable to the idea that they are the necessary weapons for a successful resistance or adaption to bureaucratic

[1] i.e. the taking over of family authority. — Analyst

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administration. It is easy to understand that if the head of the family must be constantly asking his young son to read, explain, and advise on all written documents, he finds it difficult to maintain his authority until his son has reached the customary age of marriage. Significantly, the sack in which the business papers and account books are kept has become in recent years a symbol of the authority of the head of family, who alone has the right to open it.

In the majority of cases, however, these two circumstances, although they may cause difficulties, do not force or even allow a father to hand over executive control much earlier than custom demands. If, for example, a father of fifty-nine hands over the control of family affairs to a son of twenty-six, he will undoubtedly be considered a man of weak character even where it is known that he suffers some physical disability. He must, for reasons of personal and family prestige, attempt to assert and exercise his authority. Sons are not unaware of the father's position and difficulties. During the last years of a father's exercise of power a degree of rivalry between a father and his sons is always present, but because fathers and sons, together, accept responsibility for the prestige of the family, they guard most carefully against any public expression of their differences.

After the eldest son assumes control, the father continues to do such work as he is capable of. It is generally a task of his own selection and the senior son is careful to avoid giving direct instructions of any kind to his father. There are always a few sick sheep or late lambs which need to be grazed close to the huts, and occasionally he will spend a day with one of the flocks to relieve a son. In some families with many sons, where there is no essential task for the old father to perform, he will create some activity to occupy his time. The old father of John Charisis daily saddles and exercises a favourite horse. When visitors ask where the old father is, his sons reply with affectionate but patronizing smiles that he is out with his horse again. The visitors join in the laughter at the old man's expense and the sons do not take offence, for this is a general attitude to old people in the community. They are respected if they have led honourable lives, yet in relation to present preoccupations they are unimportant. The old father always expresses his views

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
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The President has more direct control over the man who is employed by the village to regulate the flow of water to the village vegetable gardens. He is able to arrange matters so that a fair share of water is given to, or withheld from, a Sarakatsan family.

For a number of purposes the Sarakatsani require the signature of the President on forms, certificates, or passes. He may be able to cause considerable trouble to a shepherd through delay, or by finding technical irregularities in his documents. These powers of the President are particularly feared. Although some of the leaders of co-operating 'companies' of families are extremely able and alert men, the ordinary Sarakatsan head of family is completely bewildered by documents, printed forms, and regulations, most of which are written in an official language which he only half comprehends. A Sarakatsanos with a large family and only 60 sheep lost six of his animals through disease in the summer of 1955. He came to the village office to ask the President to sign a form for a loan from the Agricultural Bank to replace the dead animals. At the time he was in considerable difficulties, his family was short of flour, and on account of his poverty, small flock, and deep indebtedness, his cheese merchant would make no further advances of credit. There was no doubt about the authenticity of his claim. The agricultural guard had made a report that the animals belonged to this man and that they had the unmistakable symptoms of liver fluke. After ignoring the man's presence in the office for about three-quarters of an hour, the President suddenly pointed to one of the many conditional clauses in the regulations printed in small type. 'You understand that yours is a difficult case. It is only five days since you arrived here from the plains and this clause says that confirmation of the details of the case must be signed by the President of the village where the disease was contracted. Obviously they became sick in the plains or on the road; anyway, not here. Perhaps you must return to Philippiada to have this signed. However, I shall write to the Ministry of Agriculture in Jannina and we shall see.' The man haltingly explained his difficulties, referring to the plight of his family. The President spread his hands and smiled benignly, 'You know that I always try to help you tent-dwellers (σκηνίτες) but in this case,' putting his thumb on the offending clause, 'what

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details, the role of clients of the family and of the Roman latifunda.
(54)

54. See J. Declareuil: Ibid., p. 150.

Providing funds for small herders. In case of need, the small herder whose income did not permit savings, had no recourse but the peasant usurer--a solution that was actually a vicious circle from which, once having entered it, he found it impossible to escape.

By contrast, the Tséligato, having the possibility of providing funds to its members without demanding interest, represented the only rational solution for the indigent.

/176/ The labor requirements of large herders. When the extended family does not have sufficient man-power to maintain the livestock which, under favorable conditions, increases constantly, it joins with other herders who have smaller flocks and can put at its disposal their supplementary work potential.

The need to maintain relations with the outside world, that is to say, with the surrounding society. The simple shepherds are not in a position to fulfill this function for two reasons. First, their very engrossing work demands their uninterrupted presence close to their flocks. In the second place, they are not prepared for it, for they are generally illiterate and devoid of all social experience.

On the other hand, the extended and wealthy families are able to prepare one of their members for the demands of the indispensable socio-economic contacts with non-Sarakatsani, and give them the necessary education to succeed in this delicate task, the substance of which has been described in connection with the function of the head-manager and of which we shall speak again a little farther on.

The necessity of defending themselves and of cooperating in the economic utilization of the livestock. Though the extended family already provides an answer to this problem through blood ties and kinship (affinal and fictive) and through its functions, the Tséligato creates

86 /363 cont./

17. See pp. 144, 146, 162, 163, 167, 169-170, 236, 237-243. We shall also return to this on p. 430.

871 212 [554] 875 [562] We also know that the Sarakatsani are in general illiterate, that the Tséligas and a few individuals are somewhat able to read, write and do simple arithmetic, thanks to the rudiments of instruction given to boys--never to girls--by the teacher who is summoned to spend a few weeks in the konakia.

871 212 233 596 494 [461] But there is still another fact which deserves to be discussed in particular and which shows that the Sarakatsani are aware of the usefulness "of letters" not, of course, with a view to acquiring any learning, but for the practical aim of being able to control accountability within the Tséligato and not be duped by the possible bad faith of the Tséligas. During long hours when the animals are in pasture, when all is /364/ calm and the shepherds can watch their flocks from a distance, those who are "educated" teach the others the alphabet or arithmetic, carving the letters or the figures on tree trunks or on thin pieces of wood with their knives, from which they are never separated. The Sarakatsani speak proudly of this "open air" school which enables them, should the occasion arise, effectively to check on accountability within the Tséligato. However, it is understandable that this instruction is inadequate. And our herders have never left behind written monuments--save perhaps some letters or contracts about the location of pastures. That is why the investigator who studies their lives cannot hope to discover and be aided in his effort by texts reflecting their lives and written by themselves.

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CHAPTER IV

53 ## ART AMONG THE SARAKATSANI

The art of the Sarakatsani, like all art called "folk," is apparently naive, but in reality full of meaning. For, although in-